

**DEPARTMENT OF CALIFORNIA HIGHWAY PATROL**

*The California Highway Patrol is a law enforcement and traffic safety agency reporting to Business, Transportation and Housing Agency Secretary Maria Contreras-Sweet and Governor Gray Davis.*



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**CHP SUSPENDS CONSENT SEARCHES**

California Highway Patrol (CHP) Commissioner Spike Helmick announced yesterday the Department is temporarily suspending consent searches while management internally examines the CHP's policy, data collection techniques, and the impact of consent searches on its primary mission – traffic safety.

The CHP will continue to use traditional law enforcement techniques such as the development of probable cause searches in which the officer, through his training, experience and observation, has developed probable cause to search a vehicle. When these searches are conducted, proper documentation is required as mandated by law and policy.

"I believe that the CHP has a legitimate role in combating illegal drugs, contraband, and criminal conduct when we encounter such activities. We want to be on the best possible footing when we go to court on drug cases. Probable cause is a tried-and-true standard recognized by the courts," Helmick said. "CHP management is just doing what we constantly do – review methods and procedures to determine the most efficient means of conducting Departmental operations and provide the best possible service to the citizens of California."

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